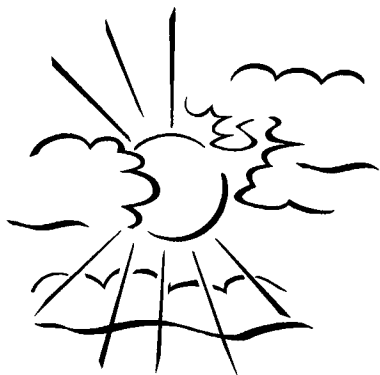


***Department
of
Human
Services***

Prepared by the
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Health Care



Articles in Today's Clips

Thursday, December 22, 2005

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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Thursday, December 22, 2005

Mich. Medicare to take a hit

Cost-cutting bill passed by U.S. Senate could cause state health care program to lose up to \$500 million.

WASHINGTON -- Michigan faces losing up to \$500 million for its embattled Medicaid program under a fiercely contested cost-cutting bill that the U.S. Senate passed Wednesday with the assistance of the 51-50 tie-breaking vote of Vice President Richard Cheney.

The cutbacks will be felt broadly in Michigan.

In addition to Medicaid recipients, who could see some services no longer available or an increase in copays, more welfare recipients will be required to work; custodial parents will get less help to collect court-ordered child support, and college students could see the cost of loans to support a degree program increase as much as \$5,000.

"Many of these cuts were pennywise and pound-foolish," said U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, D-Lansing, who, along with U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Detroit, voted against the five-year bill measure that reduces federal spending growth by nearly \$40 billion over the next five years.

"The only reason for these budget cuts is to pay for another round of tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans," Stabenow charged. "The governor and the state Legislature will have extremely difficult choices."

But President Bush hailed the vote as a "victory for taxpayers, fiscal restraint and responsible budgeting -- and it will help keep us on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009."

Bush plans to sign the bill, which, he noted, is the first time Congress has cut entitlement spending in nearly a decade.

First, however, the House must pass the Senate version, which includes slight modifications. It's unclear if the House will return briefly from its holiday recess to pass the measure, or will wait to do so until it gets back to work at the end of January.

The cuts are part of Congress' effort to reduce the federal deficit, which has soared due to the war in Iraq, Hurricane Katrina and skyrocketing health care costs. And the coming retirement of the baby boomer generation -- and their entry into the Social Security program -- will worsen Washington's fiscal woes.

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm said she was "deeply disappointed."

The state is especially worried about federal cuts to its Medicaid program, which has seen enrollments skyrocket due to job losses and an aging population.

Already, 1.45 million Michigan residents -- one out of every seven -- receive health care through Medicaid.

The program gobbled up 23 percent of the state's budget in fiscal 2005, up from 8 percent in 1980.

The state will lose up to \$100 million annually in federal funds for a Medicaid benefit that state officials say actually saves money overall. Known as targeted case management, the program does such things as link up developmentally disabled residents to safety net programs like housing vouchers and food stamps.

Paul Reinhart, Medicaid director for Michigan, also pointed to several provisions considered earlier this year by Congress but then dropped that would have helped the state.

Michigan had hoped that the proportion of federal matching funds it gets for state spending would be boosted by several percentage points above its current 57 percent. The hoped-for change, Granholm officials say, would have meant \$50 million more each year in federal funds for Medicaid.

The final bill also didn't include a provision to allow states to get rebates on pharmaceutical spending by Medicaid recipients in HMOs. That would have meant an additional \$100 million each year for the state.

"We are struggling to finance this program," said Reinhart. "Several of the mechanisms we had hoped to be able to use to relieve the burden on Michigan taxpayers didn't make it into the final bill."

Michigan also lost a \$54 million incentive payment it has received as a reward for its excellent record of helping custodial parents collect child support.

And changes in the welfare program mean that Michigan must double the number of welfare recipients who are working within two years or face fines of \$37 million.

Currently, 10,000 single parents receiving welfare are working in Michigan, which is 25 percent of the total welfare recipients. But Congress is erasing a credit Michigan had gotten for moving so many of its people off welfare in the mid-90s, requiring it to have 50 percent of its welfare recipients working.

Meanwhile, Congress limited the rate that lenders can charge on student loans.

"That's going to be very harmful," said U.S. Rep. Sander Levin, D-Royal Oak, who estimates that the change could translate into students paying out an average \$5,000 more for their loans. Yet not all was bad news for Michigan.

"We were able to make significant changes from the way the bills first came out that helped Michigan," said U.S. Rep. Joe Schwarz, R-Battle Creek, who voted in favor of the bill when the House passed it Monday a 212-206 vote.

For example, Michigan had feared losing \$6.2 million for food stamps that would forced the state to drop 25,629 adults and children off the food assistance program because tougher rules would have meant they would no longer qualify.

Requests for food assistance have risen along with the state's economic troubles: 1.1 million residents get food assistance now, double the number five years ago.

In another positive change, the state will be allowed to continue to impose a Health Maintenance Organization provider tax that generates \$280 million in federal matching funds per year for its Medicaid program until fiscal year 2010.

And the state's dairy and crop farmers were spared cuts in price supports that help them stay afloat during rocky times when prices are too low to generate profits.

"As a whole, agriculture came out ahead," said Megan Wheaton, a Congress expert at the Michigan Farm Bureau.

You can reach Deb Price at (202) 662-8736 or dprice@detnews.com.

Budget winners/losers

Medicaid: \$100 million less annually for coordinating Medicaid services.. But state can keep its HMO provider tax , which generates \$280 million a year, until 2010 .

Child support: \$54 million loss of reward given up to now for excellent record of helping parents collect child support.

Welfare: \$37 million in fines faced if state doesn't get 10,000 additional welfare recipients working within two years.

Students: Change in loan rates could mean students pay up to \$5,000 more.

Food stamps: \$6.2 million will continue to be sent for food stamps for 25,629 adults and children who were threatened with no longer qualifying.

Farmers: Dairy and crop price support safety nets stay in place.

DHS Can Run Welfare Without New Laws

The Department of Human Services (DHS) will not need to put sick or disabled welfare recipients to work and will have the power to issue sanctions against those welfare recipients who refuse to work even when Gov. Jennifer **GRANHOLM** vetoes the welfare bills currently before her, the department reported today.

The Attorney General's office recently gave DHS its opinion on the upcoming sunset facing the department and its ability to provide welfare services after the sunset sinks into the horizon on Jan. 1.

After receiving that information, DHS Spokeswoman Maureen **SORBET** reported that the department believes it can continue to exempt cash recipients from Work First requirements for 90 days as long as it has documentation of a mental or physical illness, limitations or a disability that restricts the client's ability to work.

The department also believes that current laws allow it to create social contracts that set a minimum number of work hours. For those who don't live up to those contracts, sanctions are still possible, Sorbet said.

These conclusions should prevent DHS from the feared bureaucratic disaster that some expected when Granholm vetoes the welfare reform bills currently in front of her.

When the Legislature passed bills that extended the welfare sunsets past Dec. 31, it also set a new 48-month lifetime limit for able-bodied people to receive welfare. The bills would also pull welfare payments from recipients who break their Work First requirements three times. Granholm has all but promised that she will veto the bills.

The Republican Legislature sent the governor the bills under the belief that a decision to veto the bills would create a bureaucratic nightmare for DHS. Lawmakers were under the belief that without an extension of the sunset being adjusted within these bills, everybody receiving welfare, regardless of physical ailments, would need to report for Work First. Also, it was believed that DHS would not have had the ability to penalize a welfare recipient who refused to work with caseworkers.

That appears, now, not to be the case.

The talk around the Capitol the last few days seemed to indicate that the Legislature may return on Dec. 29, *sine die*, to take up welfare reform legislation if Granholm vetoed the bills as expected.

House Republican Spokesman Matt **RESCH** told MIRS today that a Thursday session next week is possible, but nothing will be decided until after Granholm takes action on the welfare bills.

Young mother denies killing 3-month-old daughter

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Ken Kolker
The Grand Rapids Press

IONIA -- A young mother accused of killing her disabled 3-month-old daughter said she did not kill the girl.

"God gave her to me," Amy Nash, 22, said Wednesday in a tearful interview at the Ionia County Jail. "God didn't want her to suffer, so He took her back."

Nash is awaiting trial for second-degree murder in the March 13 death of Janie Nash, who was born with Spina Bifida, a spinal condition that leads to nerve damage and leg paralysis. Her baby had club feet and water on her brain and spent the first six weeks of her life in a hospital.

Nash is accused of intentionally leaving her baby face-down on a pillow in a crib, knowing it would kill her, while her husband, Robert Nash, was running an errand.

Ionia County prosecutors say she confessed after Belding police re-opened the investigation into the baby's death, which first was believed caused by Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

In a written confession, entered recently in court, she wrote:

"I was under so much stress of her and the medical stuff and little or no help from Rob I snapped and my baby died on 3/13/05. I love my daughters so much more than life. I know laying Janie on a pillow face down she would die. I wrote this on my own free will."

On Wednesday, Nash contradicted the confession, saying she did not intend to kill her child and did not know her actions would kill her.

"I was interrogated for 45 minutes," she said, when asked why she wrote the confession.

Nash, the former Amy Lofquist who dropped out of East Kentwood High School, said she loved her baby, her second child. It was the first child with her husband.

They married last year and lived in a small apartment in Belding, where the girl died. Nash most recently worked as a housekeeper in a Grand Rapids motel.

"My child was perfect to me," she said. "There was nothing wrong with her. ... I loved her, and I love her still."

Janie reminded her of her oldest daughter, Jade, 2, she said.

"There were certain things she would do, her looks, her personality," she said of Janie. Like her first daughter, Janie was "full of life and attitude," she said.

Her husband has said she wanted an abortion after discovering in a prenatal test that the girl would be born with Spina Bifida, but he talked her out of it.

She said she never wanted an abortion.

She said she planned to talk to her husband about that on Christmas Day, when he is expected to visit her in jail.

If she had had an abortion, she said, "I would still have the heartbreak I have now."

Robert Nash has said he doesn't know what to believe about the death.

The last time he saw his wife with their daughter, on March 13, she was kissing the girl's forehead and taking her back to bed, he said.

About an hour later, when he returned from an errand, Janie was lifeless, he said.

Amy Nash refused to discuss details of the death. She said she was arrested in November because "I was there. I was the only adult there."

"Everything happens for a reason," she said. "Sometimes, we don't know the reason until we are judged for the life we've lived."

Teen Accused Of Burning Infant Sister

18-Year-Old Also Hospitalized

POSTED: 5:21 pm EST December 21, 2005

DETROIT -- A 5-month-old girl was severely burned after her 18-year-old sister allegedly placed her in scalding water Wednesday, Local 4 reported.

Police said they were called to a home on Lindsey Street on the city's northwest side at about 2:15 p.m. They learned the 5-month-old was burned and the 18-year-old slit her wrists, Local 4 reported.

The infant was transported to Children's Hospital in Detroit. She is expected to recover, but the extent of her injuries was not known, Local 4 reported.

The 18-year-old was transported to Detroit Receiving Hospital where she was brought to the crisis center, according to the station's report.

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Published December 22, 2005

Angel House to reduce trauma for abused kids Mason shelter has grand opening today

By Hugh Leach
Lansing State Journal

MASON - A gift from the community to neglected and abused children in Ingham County will be unwrapped today.

Angel House, a 15-bed temporary shelter, is ready to be shown off.

"This is a huge Christmas present," Angel House Director Jerre Cory said. "This is an unbelievable dream come true. It's been so inspiring the way the community has wrapped itself around this project.

"Literally hundreds of people have donated money, materials and labor."

Angel House is expected to accept its first children by late January.

Final preparations for the open house still were going on Wednesday. Carpet was being laid and Cory expected to work late helping to assemble beds for children.

Angel House, a program of Child and Family Services - Capital Area, is intended to reduce the trauma abused and neglected children experience.

"When a child is in protective custody he or she is repeatedly interviewed by police and protective services to build a case to prosecute the perpetrator," said Jim Paparella, Child and Family Services executive director.

"Angel House is a one-stop caring center for all the agencies involved where they will go to the child instead of the child having to come to them. It will be very child-friendly and less traumatic for the children than being interviewed in the back of a police car."

Angel House also will allow Child and Family Services the time it needs to properly place children with relatives or in foster homes.

Sibling groups often have to be split up until placement decisions are made, Paparella said. Angel House will provide a place where they can stay for up to two weeks and allow time for better placement planning.

Contact Hugh Leach at 377-1119 or hleach@lsj.com.

Angel House

- Where: 830 Kerns Road, Mason
- Grand opening and open house: Program at 3 p.m. today with facility tours available from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

How to help

- About \$300,000 still must be raised if Angel House is to be free of construction debt.
- For more information or to donate money, materials or labor to the project, call Child and Family Services - Capital Area, at 882-4000.

Metro Detroit

Dad asks court to let girlfriend sleep over

Changes possible for law, child custody

December 22, 2005

BY BILL LAITNER
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Michigan's 74-year-old law banning cohabitation -- a remnant of a bygone era on the books in only a handful of states today -- is being challenged by a divorced Ferndale man barred from sleeping under the same roof with his girlfriend when his young daughters visit.

Christian Muller, 35, said his girlfriend, Michelle Moon, has to sleep in his van parked in his driveway or spend the night with friends when his daughters, ages 5 and 7, come to visit on alternate weekends.

"Somehow we've been able to keep this from them," said Muller, who divorced in 2003 after seven years of marriage. "The kids wake up in the morning, and I get them their breakfast, and after that I go out and wake up Michelle, and she comes in and nobody says anything. I don't know how much longer we can keep this up."

Lawyers for the American Civil Liberties Union said Wednesday they had appealed on Muller's behalf, asking the Michigan Supreme Court to hear the case and ultimately overturn a lower-court ruling.

If the court rules in favor of Muller, the decision likely would overturn the 1931 law that forbids cohabitation in Michigan -- one of only seven states that have kept such a law on the books, according to the ACLU.

A decision upholding the law, however, could affect the child-custody arrangements of thousands of divorced couples, opening the door to other requests on ex-spouses' sleeping and dating arrangements.

At least 6% of Michigan's 2.6 million children age 18 and under -- perhaps 156,000 or more -- live in households where the adults are unmarried, according to Kids Count Databook 2005.

Muller said that some weekends, his girlfriend even drives to Cincinnati to stay with her parents, taking her own 8-year-old daughter with her.

Moon's inside-outside sleeping pattern has been going on for 18 months.

Muller is an account manager with a trade consulting firm and leader of the local rock band the Blue Sunrays.

The lawyer for Muller's ex-wife, Nicolette Muller of Grand Blanc, said her client has had enough of the cohabitation tussle and was not carrying the dispute any farther.

"I explained to her that the Supreme Court could rule her way" even if she takes no additional action, Farmington Hills lawyer Elizabeth Silverman said.

The case dates to an order by Oakland County Circuit Judge Daniel Patrick O'Brien, who ruled last year in favor of Nicolette Muller after she requested that her ex-husband's girlfriend sleep elsewhere when her daughters visit.

At a hearing in March 2004, O'Brien said, "I will order a mutual no-unrelated adult overnights. ... I'm not making any findings of fact one way or the other."

But in a subsequent appeal by Christian Muller -- who handled the case himself because he said he had no funds to pay a lawyer -- the Michigan Court of Appeals ruled in October that the applicable law was the statute banning cohabitation.

If the state Supreme Court decides to hear the case, its outcome likely will hinge on whether privacy rights -- said to be implicit in the U.S. Constitution -- also provide the right for adults to live together, married or not, said Michael Steinberg, the lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union of Michigan who is handling the case.

"There are other Michigan Court of Appeals opinions that contradict what the Court of Appeals did in this case. So the law in this state says that the courts can't rely on the cohabitation statute to deny partners visitation rights," he said.

Society's view of cohabitation has shifted radically in the last three decades, said Thomas W. Blume, a Bloomfield Hills licensed marriage and family therapist.

Cohabitation offends some religious groups, but it is now seen by many in society as a normal way of life and often as a pathway to marriage, said Blume, an associate professor at Oakland University.

In court testimony, Nicolette Muller said that before her children were born, she had cohabited with Christian Muller.

Her request for no cohabitation while her children visit, however, is not unusual in legal disputes over parenting time, family-practice lawyers said.

Kathleen Dilger, a family practice attorney for 22 years, said such requests used to be standard in all counties but aren't anymore.

"In Macomb and Lapeer, it's still pretty much the policy of the bench -- no overnights, especially against women. They tell you, 'You want to lose your kid?'"

"But in Oakland, the judges generally will say, 'I don't want to impose my moral views on you' even though they may not approve" of overnight stays by a partner, said Dilger, whose office is in Rochester.

Contact **BILL LAITNER** at 248-351-3297. Staff writer Frank Witsil contributed to this report.

Cohabitation considerations

When non-married parents live with a partner:

- Communicate openly about the relationships with each other -- and with the cohabitating partner's children.
- Clearly establish what the cohabitating partner's parental role will be.
- In long-term, committed relationships, prepare legal documentation to allow the unmarried partner to make medical -- and other -- decisions for the children.

Source: Thomas W. Blume, licensed family and marriage therapist

Teen gang member in jail

Thursday, December 22, 2005

JOE SNAPPER
THE SAGINAW NEWS

For the moment, the manic scramble of gang life has ended for Ray. Enter jail life.

The tortured 16-year-old featured last winter in a profile of one of Saginaw's most abused and abusive youths, Ray -- which is not his real name -- is in the Saginaw County Jail facing trial. Accused this summer of another round of ripoffs so violent he could spend life in prison, the one-time West Side drug dealer is staring down charges as an adult after his waiver from juvenile court, law enforcement officials said.

The Saginaw News is not listing the exact charges to avoid identifying Ray and to shield him from gang reprisal.

In a February story, Ray recounted his abusive childhood, his mother's efforts to keep him straight even as she took his drug money to pay routine bills and his own terrifying path as it wound through a witnessed murder, a friend's public suicide and his confession to a drug-related shooting.

In the past nine months, Ray's mother, unable to control him, kicked him out of his house. But rather than violent death, Ray's life on Saginaw's streets ended in a police cruiser, police sources and community activists including the Rev. Roy Baldwin of Saginaw told The News.

Despite efforts by such mentors as Baldwin, Ray did not -- or perhaps could not -- ditch his gangster lifestyle.

Scores of his peers have shared his failure.

In the past nine months, conditions have only worsened for the young men and women recruited -- or often conscripted -- by preying neighborhood gang members into selling drugs, watching for police or entering the illegal sex trade.

Police presence has faded with layoffs, and one-time FBI-led gang enforcement agents left Saginaw's streets when funding dried up.

Gang violence nearly turned deadly inside a crowded Saginaw High School in October. A teen with links to a North Side gang member is accused of shooting a 15-year-old from the city's South Side during the lunch hour.

Despite a point-blank gunshot wound to his chest, 15-year-old Daniel Foster lived. Prosecutors have charged Clarence W. Russell III, now 16, with attempted murder, which is punishable by life in prison.

Joe Snapper is a staff writer for The Saginaw News. You may reach him at 776-9715.

AP NEWS

Dec 22, 10:27 AM EST

Judge Rules Caging Ohio Children Was Abuse

NORWALK, Ohio (AP) -- A couple abused some of their 11 adopted children by making them sleep in wooden cages without pillows or mattresses, a judge ruled Thursday.

The special-needs children, who were removed from the home of Michael and Sharen Gravelle on Sept. 9, will remain in foster care until Huron County Juvenile Judge Timothy Cardwell holds another hearing to determine their future.

Cardwell's written ruling Thursday did dismiss allegations that the Gravelles neglected the children. He said they did feed and clothe them, but that making them sleep in the cages still constituted abuse.

The Gravelles have not been charged with a crime and have denied abusing the children. They say they built the cages in 2003 to protect the children from each other and themselves.

Published December 22, 2005

[From the Lansing State Journal]

Marco K. Jones: Academy redirects teens

When I arrived at the Michigan Youth Challenge Academy, it didn't take long to realize my life was going to change. I wasn't sure how the experience would work out, but I knew that my days of skipping classes were over. Looking back, I can't express how grateful I am to have made the decision to join the Academy. It has changed my life.

I'm originally from Lansing. I grew up in Delta Township, attending Waverly Public Schools. By the time I had reached high school, I was already slacking off in school and falling behind in my classes. After a while, getting into trouble didn't seem like anything out of the ordinary.

If you had asked me why I was skipping school and failing classes, I couldn't have told you the answer. But after graduating from the academy this month, the answer is crystal clear.

Through the academy, I've learned the importance of self-discipline. I've learned that it's important to motivate yourself to pursue your dreams. I've learned that it's everyone's responsibility to make their own decisions, and that we should do our best to make the right decisions.

Through our work with Hurricane Katrina victims and other community service events, I've learned the importance of service. We were the first responders to victims relocated to Battle Creek in September, providing food and water, setting up shelter and translating for non-English-speaking victims. Beyond that, we tried to help people whose lives had been turned upside down by consoling them and listening to them.

That day, I learned what it feels like to help others in need.

The academy accepts teens, ages 16-18, who have dropped out or are in danger of dropping out of school - many who are from rough backgrounds and lacked direction. I've heard that about 43 percent of high school students in Lansing schools end up dropping out of school. Dropouts often get mixed up with drugs and crime, and never really figure out what they want to do with their lives.

After going through the academy, we cadets are confident about where we're going with our lives. We can walk around with our heads held high.

Sure, the academy was difficult. Waking up at 5 a.m. is hard for anybody, especially a teenager. Learning and training into the evening makes for a long day. But we're all incredibly proud of the fact that we made it.

My fellow cadets and I graduated on Dec. 10. We now will return to high school for a diploma or GED, attend college, enter the work force or join the military.

I will return to Waverly High School to graduate in June 2006 and then plan on attending Western Michigan University, where I will also join the Army National Guard. But, regardless of where we end up, we leave with a plan, a vision for our lives, and a group of lifelong friends who shared the most rewarding experience of our lives.

Marco K. Jones of Lansing was a Michigan Youth Challenge Academy cadet.

Thursday, December 22, 2005

Judge rules man can't live with any women Waterford man convicted on drug charge had long history of domestic violence.

David Shepardson / The Detroit News

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP-- Eric Brandenburg has a long history of domestic violence -- including beating up two fiancées and sending one to the hospital.

U.S. District Judge Bernard A. Friedman decided to hand down an unusual sentence -- especially for the violation of a drug sentence.

When Brandenburg, 33, of Waterford is released from prison in October, he cannot live with any woman for a year. Moreover, he must notify women with whom he has a social relationship of his history of violence and within 12 hours of meeting them, he must give his probation officer their contact information.

A federal appeals court has now upheld that sentence, despite Brandenburg's complaint that it denies him his First Amendment right of free association.

Friedman, now the chief judge in Detroit, said Wednesday that judges need flexibility to fulfill the goals of a sentence. He often requires alcoholics or drug addicts to stay out of bars during their probation, for example.

Letting Brandenburg live with a woman "would be like allowing a sexual predator to work at an all girls-school," Friedman said.

Brandenburg's lawyers immediately appealed Friedman's order in February, saying it violated their client's rights by ordering him to not live with a woman and that the definition of "social contact" is unconstitutionally vague.

The federal appeals court disagreed Dec. 14.

The "defendant has a history of abusing women with whom he lives," wrote U.S. Appeals Judge Eric Clay, a Clinton appointee who sits in Detroit, for the panel. "Because of this history, the district court reasonably believed that (Brandenburg) was likely to abuse any female with whom (he) lived."

James Gerometta, an assistant federal defender who represented Brandenburg, said his office was considering filing an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court.

"It was our feeling that the order deprives him of his constitutional rights to free association," Gerometta said Wednesday. He also argued the requirement to report social conduct "was too vague."

"Social contact is a very vague term that can be interpreted loosely or very tightly. It's not fair to put him at the whim of a probation officer."

In 2002, Brandenburg pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute marijuana after being named as one of 14 conspirators in a 2000 indictment.

In January 2004, Brandenburg completed his two-year sentence on that charge and began three years of supervised release on those conditions that included reporting social contact with any women to his probation officer and informing the women of his history of violence.

Eight months later, Waterford Township police took a police report that Brandenburg had assaulted his fiancée. He was sentenced Oct. 25, 2004, after pleading guilty to domestic violence. He also allegedly stole \$250 from his employer's cash box -- and cashed \$1,300 in checks from a business account at a local party store. He also failed to report to his probation officer for more than four months and failed to attend court-ordered anger management or submit to drug and alcohol testing.

On Feb. 9, Friedman sentenced Brandenburg to two more years in prison for violating his probation after he admitted to five violations.

Friedman again imposed the conditions that he report his social contact with women and added the stricter condition that he not live with any woman after his release. That condition will last for one more year because that's the maximum length of probation left.

Brandenburg is scheduled to be released from the Federal Correction Institution in Schuylkill, Pa. in October 2006.

You can reach David Shepardson at (313) 222-2028 or dshepardson@detnews.com



Adoption day: Gabrielle Pennell (center, above) laughs Wednesday as family and friends gather at her adoption by the Pennells during Judge George Economy's adoption session at the Veterans Memorial Courthouse in Lansing. At left, Gabrielle's adoptive mother, Jamie Pennell, kisses her after the adoption becomes final. The Pennells, of Leslie, have a special needs day-care center in their home. They have been 17-year-old Gabrielle's foster parents since April 2004. "We didn't go into foster parenting looking to adopt, but she stole our hearts," Jamie Pennell said. Gabrielle has cerebral palsy and will be the Pennells' fifth child.

KEVIN W. FOWLER
For the Lansing State Journal

Energy Efficiency Grants Awarded

Eight organizations will share \$10 million in low-income energy efficiency grants awarded Tuesday by the Public Service Commission (MPSC).

Recipients of the grants that come from the Low-Income and Energy Efficiency Fund are:

- Department of Human Services (DHS), \$4.5 million for statewide distribution to low-income households for energy efficiency upgrades, with up to 20 percent of the grant available for energy education
- Michigan Community Action Agency Association (MCAAA), \$2 million for statewide distribution to provide weatherization upgrades for low-income households, with up to 20 percent to be spent on client weatherization education
- Nova Development Group, \$1.35 million for energy efficiency upgrades and installations for low-income, multi-family dwellings throughout Michigan
- Bay de Noc Community College (M-TEC), \$750,000 for purchase and distribution of energy savings kits to low-income rural households in Michigan
- Nonprofit Facilities Assistance Center, \$500,000 for matching grants to non-profit facilities for energy efficiency upgrades, energy efficiency audits, and energy efficiency/weatherization education
- Urban Options, \$400,000 for weatherization of low-income clients' homes, with a focus on heating systems, for 11 counties located throughout the state
- Habitat for Humanity, \$250,000 for energy efficiency upgrades to home scheduled for construction in 2006 for low-income families in Michigan
- Warm Training Center, \$250,000 for energy education for consumers who receive energy assistance

MPSC Chair J. Peter **LARK** called the grants an effort "to help reduce energy costs for low-income families and seniors just as we enter another heating season" and "will help reduce energy costs for years to come."

In addition, the Commission today announced a continuation of the voluntary Homeless Shelter Energy Assistance Credit Program that provides utility bill discounts to many of the state's homeless shelters. Under the program, participating utilities voluntarily contribute up to 25 percent of the winter energy bills to the shelters in their service areas.

Last winter, 194 Michigan shelters received credits totaling \$120,583, allowing the shelters to provide additional services to some of Michigan's neediest residents.

The MPSC today announced it would conduct a public hearing on the proposed amendments to the Michigan Gas Safety Standards (R 460.20606) beginning at 9 a.m. Jan. 24 at its Lansing office.

The Commission also is seeking public comments on the MPSC staff's recently released 2004-2005 Michigan Renewables Energy Program Report by Jan. 31. Any comments should reference Case No. U-14345.

Good deeds: Celebrating unsung heroes

Auburn Hills officers aid those in need 'Shop with a Cop' program takes the families shopping at local stores for Christmas gifts financed by donations.

Jennifer Chambers / The Detroit News

December 22, 2005

AUBURN HILLS -- As a police officer, Mike Kazyak has spent the last 20 years dashing the hopes of would-be criminals with his crime prevention advice to local businesses and residents. Today, Kazyak and two fellow officers plan to spend the morning granting Christmas wishes to five Auburn Hills families in need of help.

Kazyak, along with Auburn Hills officers James Sparre and Ivette Negrón, are taking the families shopping at the Auburn Hills' Wal-Mart compliments of the PepsiCo., which has donated \$1,000 in gift cards for the Police Department's "Shop with a Cop" program.

The children and their parents, who were selected through Avondale Youth Assistance because they are struggling financially, will each get gift cards and the chance to shop for a member of the family.

"We look for parents who are down on their luck, those that need a helping hand. It's hard for them to come up with extra finances for Christmas," Kazyak said.

Last year with two days left until Christmas, Kazyak single-handedly organized the department's first shopping program, which helped 10 families.

"The families are pretty ecstatic. They aren't looking for the freebies," Kazyak said. "Last year it was a really neat experience. One family had just gone through a house fire. They had a chance to buy some essentials more than anything else -- the coats, the boots, the shoes."

One family was "out of their mind" excited about the chance to give their children some presents and the chance to shop for others, Kazyak said.

"It really is a heart-warming feeling. I have two kids. I tell them not everyone has the opportunities we have and not everyone is as fortunate as we are. We need to count our blessings," he said.

Cathy Moldenhauer, a Wal-Mart invoice clerk and the store's "Good Works" representative, said the program has turned out to be a great experience for the kids who otherwise may not have much of a Christmas.

"It gives them the opportunity to buy a brother or sister or mom a gift. They get to pick it out. It's a learning experience too.

"They are given so much money and it gives them a chance to see the joy of giving at Christmas," Moldenhauer said.

You can reach Jennifer Chambers at (248) 647-7402 or jchambers@detnews.com.

Violence victims get holiday help

Wayne County clerk hopes toy and clothing drive sends message that community should give year-round.

Darren A. Nichols / The Detroit News

December 22, 2005

DETROIT-- Wayne County Clerk Cathy M. Garrett doesn't want anyone to think that Christmas is the only time people should give to domestic violence victims.

In fact, Wednesday's drop-off of clothing and toys to hundreds of Metro Detroit families is just a culmination of what she seeks to do daily.

Her efforts, she says, are just one step in her quest "to help eradicate (or) eliminate domestic violence."

"People get a social consciousness during the holidays," Garrett said. "(But) this is something we deal with every day -- 365 days a year. This is very important. We provide support to them throughout the year."

Mary Jane Hood, an associate director of First Step in Plymouth, recalls a woman who was in tears telling her daughter not to worry about Christmas. Nearly 100 families will receive a gift basket, which will include items donated by Garrett's office.

"The community hears that cry and provides the things people need to make sure children have a good Christmas," said Hood, whose organization assists about 7,000 people each year.

"It's so exciting to see how the community is able to give, even in these times where there have been so many terrible disasters. The clerk's office is very responsive to the community's need. Clerk Garrett is a phenomenal woman, as well as her staff."

Garrett is seeking to bring attention to a growing problem nationally. Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women. About 5.3 million women are abused each year, according to the statistics compiled by the American Institute on Domestic Violence.

More than 500,000 women are stalked by an intimate partner each year. Of those, about 1,232 women are killed by an intimate partner, according to the institute.

In Michigan, more than 48,310 domestic violence offenses were reported to the Uniform Crime report program in 2003.

The Wayne County courts processed more than 35,000 domestic violence cases last year.

The toy and clothing drive is an attempt by Garrett's office to bring awareness to domestic violence in Wayne County. It grew from efforts to bring dignity to women who filed personal protection orders in her office.

When Garrett first took office, people had to stand in three different lines to file the request; now the process has been streamlined into one place.

Garrett says it makes an embarrassing situation a little easier to bear because the process is now more customer-friendly.

For the past three years, Garrett also has hosted a Domestic Violence Awareness Month breakfast, where she has honored human service programs and area shelters. The program, which

includes an award ceremony, highlights people in the Metro Detroit area who are working toward reducing domestic violence.

Admission is a donated item, which include clothing, toiletries or other gifts such as cell phones for people who get out of shelters. The program has received more than 75,000 items that have been donated to local shelters. It included about 20,000 items this year.

Laurie Moore, executive director of Looking For My Sister shelter, says she doesn't know what the 13 women with 18 children would have for Christmas if it wasn't for Garrett's efforts.

Moore said the response she received from a survey she handed out after Thanksgiving was overwhelming. The donations mean more, knowing they're coming from someone who works in government, rather than an individual or a family, she added.

"They know they have the support," Moore said. "The Wayne County Clerk's office helps in a number of ways. It's a glimmer of hope for the women and children who are victimized by acts of violence during the holiday season especially. Domestic violence needs to be everybody's business as a community. We need to reach out to these families."

You can reach Darren A. Nichols at (734) 462-2190 or dnichols@detnews.com.

DETROIT

Church to feed needy on Christmas

In celebration of its longstanding commitment of community outreach, Michigan's oldest African-American church, Second Baptist, has partnered with the Black Action Movement to host the second annual Feed the Needy Program on Christmas Day. The event will be inside the church's fellowship hall from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The church is at 441-461 Monroe. The program has raised cash and food donations and expects to feed more than 300 people. For information or to volunteer, call John Draper at (313) 350-4420.

Credit Union raises money for two agencies

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Melissa Burden

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The Shelter of Flint and the Consortium on Child Abuse and Neglect will split \$11,555.72 raised during Dort Federal Credit Union's annual "Make A Snowman Smile" fundraiser.

Over a six-week period, the Flint-based credit union collected donations from members and staff in exchange for paper snowmen that donators could decorate with their name.

That lump of coal in your stocking can help out others

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION
Thursday, December 22, 2005

JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

FLINT - There's nothing naughty about giving someone a lump of coal this year. Streat Fuel and Storage, 800 Erie St., is selling stockings filled with coal for \$5, with all the proceeds going to Flint's North End Soup Kitchen.

"It's always fun to see folks come in and ask for a lump of coal," said Streat owner David Duffy. Each stocking has five walnut-sized pieces of coal that have been washed and sprayed with lacquer to make them kid-friendly.

"You don't want it smudging the furniture," Duffy said.

So far, the stocking campaign has raised about \$400 for the soup kitchen. Streat Fuel will be open until 1 p.m. Saturday for last-minute shoppers.

With the high cost of heat, Duffy said, there is no shame in handing out coal.

"I've given it as a gift before ... with a big red ribbon on top," he said.

Details: Streat Fuel at (810) 232-0167.

Warm gesture from church puts coats on needy

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION
Thursday, December 22, 2005

By George Jaksa
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FLINT - The nearly \$13,000 would have been a welcome boost to Promise Tabernacle's plans for an expanded sanctuary and fellowship hall.

But the Rev. Frederick Flowers Sr. couldn't get past the winter scenes outside his north Flint church.

"I used to see people walking by our door in the winter maybe just wearing two shirts or two sweatshirts," Flowers said. "I wanted to do something to help them."

So while many churches and charities are satisfied with collecting and giving away used winter coats to the needy, Flowers dipped into church coffers to help. He came up with \$12,770 to buy almost 700 brand new women's, men's and children's coats. Most were purchased at half-price from Kmart in Clio.

"We could have put the money in our building fund, but this also teaches our people to have a giving heart," Flowers said.

The church, formerly Golden Leaf Missionary Baptist Church, 815 W. Carpenter Road, wants to add on for an expanding congregation of about 340 families.

Some 50 volunteers showed up at church before 6 a.m. Wednesday to prepare for the mass coat giveaway.

Families who had called in advance started arriving at 10 a.m. to select coats from tables and racks in rooms and the church hallway.

The recipients, who learned about the giveaway from a church announcement, came from as far as Owosso, Fenton and Oakland County.

"I enjoy watching the children," Flowers said. "I like to see them go up to the tables and pick out their own coats."

Jamone Hunter, 10, of Flint, smiled broadly as he showed off his coat to his mother, Marlo Hitchcock, 37.

"I think it is real wonderful what the church is doing," said Hitchcock, who also was picking out coats for herself and her three daughters. "I am trying to make ends meet, so this helps a lot."

Jamone said his winter coat from last year was too small. The new one, with the store tags still on it, matched his red-and-white tennis shoes.

Pearl Gilmore, director of the church's neighborhood services, said Kmart was the only area store that offered deep discounts for the items. A delegation from the church went to the W. Vienna Road store on Dec. 14 to pick out the coats.

After turning to Kmart stores in Bay City, Saginaw and Sandusky to help answer the church's request, Clio Kmart Manager Ed Schwind opened early especially for the Promise Tabernacle volunteers, who formed a caravan of vehicles to transport the coats back to the church.

"We had a whole crew here to help them shop for the coats and package them," Schwind said. "It was a great drive and was one of the nicest feelings I have ever had."

On Wednesday, Flowers happily watched the buzz as the needy picked out their coats.

"Some of the people came up and gave me candy, and one woman gave me a tangerine," he said with a laugh. "It's a blessing."

Longtime friends find common cause in charity

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Matt Vande Bunte
The Grand Rapids Press

For more than two decades, Olga Van Clees worked as a sales clerk in children's wear at the Meijer store on Kalamazoo Avenue and 28th Street SE in Grand Rapids. Nancy Stoutjesdyk worked as a cashier, and Elaine De Ruiter was back in the marking room.

Over the years, they remained close. And now, by donating to the Santa Claus Girls, their friendship is translating into brighter holidays for area youngsters.

"When you work somewhere 25 years, they're just like your family," said De Ruiter, 75. "Meijer has been good to us and we still get together in their name. We have lots of fun talking about old memories."

With some of their friends passed away and others down south for the winter, the annual contribution from a group of retired associates from Meijer store No. 11 was smaller this year than in the past. But The Press-sponsored charity -- and the thousands of Kent County children it serves -- still will benefit from the gift collected at the group's Christmas gathering earlier this month. This year, 11 people pooled \$62.

"The Santa Claus Girls are doing such a great job," Van Clees said. "It's such a beautiful thing to do."

Van Clees, 80, got the group of colleagues together after she retired in 1985 from the store. She vowed never to forget the workplace friends who helped her through a two-year span when she lost her husband, mother and son-in-law.

"The Meijer family was there for me," she said. "They were so good to me."

Santa Claus Girls aims to raise \$165,000 to buy holiday gifts for Kent County children in need. Cash donations will be accepted throughout the holiday season.

Mail them to Santa Claus Girls, c/o The Grand Rapids Press, 155 Michigan St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Names of contributors will appear in The Press, so please double check for correct spellings. To contribute by credit card, call 222-5796 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays.

Volunteers ensure holiday joy

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Amanda Greenman
The Grand Rapids Press

HOLLAND -- Julie Kelley clearly struggled to best express her gratitude as she picked out a bike and some Christmas gifts for her children and family at the Salvation Army on Wednesday.

"I like the generosity of the people here," she finally said with a smile.

"It's an overwhelming amount of gratitude that people have," said Jennifer Wrona, a student who has volunteered with the Salvation Army for the past five years.

Wrona helped Kelley select from tables that contained plentiful amounts of toys organized by children's ages, stuffed animals, mittens and hats, games, and Christmas decorations and wrapping paper.

The Salvation Army in Holland, which serves Allegan County and half of Ottawa County, expected to help at least 800 families Tuesday, Wednesday and today. They work with several agencies, businesses, churches and families who donate to area families each year food baskets and toys, through the Toys for Tots and Angel Tree programs.

Gisela Grant was a volunteer for the first time this year, but the Salvation Army was a familiar place because she had to rely on them a few years ago to get things for her family.

"What they gave me was all that I had for my children at Christmas," she recalled.

At the age of 10, Grant's son, Ricky, decided to volunteer for the Salvation Army and has been volunteering ever since. Ricky, who is now 13, helped this year by passing out food, convinced his mom to volunteer along with Judy Zwak and her son, Josh Zwak.

"I like the happy faces on people. They have fun with me," said 10-year-old Josh, who despite being one of the younger volunteers on Wednesday, helped visitors select stuffed animals from one of the tables.

The Salvation Army had approximately 100 volunteers working to pass out items this week.

Brian Doolittle works 45 to 50 hours a week as a volunteer helping to coordinate the food items and the Angel Tree project during the holiday season.

"It starts the day after Thanksgiving, and I work until Christmas Eve," said Doolittle, who has been volunteering for the past seven years.

Salvation Army Commander Major Keith Welch said donations seem to be down this year, but they still have enough to give to families who show up.

"This is our ninth Christmas doing this. We may have shortfalls, but never have had to turn people away for lack of funds yet."

Welch says they often buy extra food and supplies in case more people than expected show up, and save up extra items for future use.

"It's one of the most generous communities I've worked in," Welch said.

Teens' toy drive brightens holidays

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Morgan Jarema
The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- A pair of Northview High School students got exactly what they wanted for Christmas this year: To make the holidays brighter for needy children.

Emily Obney and Corinn Knuth, both 14, collected more than 300 stuffed animals and distributed them last week to children who are part of the D. A. Blodgett Services for Children & Families Big Brothers/Big Sisters program.

"This is what we wanted," Obney said from behind a folding table overflowing with the toys she and Knuth collected in less than a month from family members, churches and schoolmates. They handed them out at the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Christmas party last week at West Catholic High School.

"It's just about knowing that they got something for Christmas," Knuth said.

Three-year-old Romell, of Grand Rapids, scored Blue, the "Blue's Clues" dog. His brother DeAndre, 8, snagged a squishy snake and a huggable bear. Their other brother, James, 7, clutched a bear of his own.

"I'm gonna name him Mr. P.J.," James said.

Lori Postma, D.A. Blodgett director of development, had received an e-mail last month from the girls asking if they could donate stuffed animals.

The girls explained that they hoped to let the children "know they are not alone in this world," she said.

It was a no-brainer for Postma.

"Normally, we like to give gifts to the children, and we've had other organizations donate bears," she said. "But this really struck me as incredible: Fourteen-year-old girls who want to give something away rather than receive something."

Program keeps toys in holiday

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Gary W. Morrison
The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- Raymond Jackson knows just what his two daughters want for Christmas: dolls.

But Jackson, a Muskegon resident, said his participation in Mel Trotter Ministries' alcohol rehabilitation program makes it difficult to even think about Christmas shopping. The residential program prohibits him from any outside trips during most of his treatment.

"Being an absent parent is hard," he said.

"I'm hoping to get my act cleaned up so I can be with them."

Jackson's children won't go without gifts from him this year.

For the past five years, Mel Trotter has opened its own toy store at Christmas for program participants, said Kathy Durling, director of children and families. Churches, businesses and families donate the toys, she said.

Any toys remaining after those in the residential treatment program select their gifts will be distributed to children living in Mel Trotter's shelter, Durling said. About 40 to 60 women, who have about 15 children with them, live in the shelter daily.

Donations get kids into spirit of giving

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Keith Essenburg
The Grand Rapids Press

BYRON TOWNSHIP -- Just what does \$1,500 worth of toys look like?

Countryside Elementary School students know it can be a mountain of goods, containing stuffed animals, board games, dolls and whiffle balls and bats.

All those toys, along with bag after bag of canned and nonperishable foods are finding their way to families in need for Christmas through the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys for Tots.

This year's drive was initiated at Countryside when Carrie and Dave DeKam, parents of third-grader Regan DeKam, donated \$1,000 to encourage students to get involved with the program.

Countryside third-graders added to the DeKams' gift, and the school's parent-teacher organization added \$500, before students went a shopping spree for boys and girls.

"I wanted to teach my daughter and (other students) to give and to have fun doing it," said Dave DeKam, who owns DeKam Tile, a commercial flooring company.

Acknowledging it was an expensive lesson, DeKam said the contribution was worth it because his daughter and her classmates "got to see what it was like to pick stuff out and give it away."

Regan DeKam, 8, is treasurer of her class' student council.

"Some people have lots of toys, and some don't," she said.

"You want to make (those without) happy, too."

One of Regan's classmates, Marisa Spetoskey, added: "You want to make people happy who can't afford toys."

The third-graders' involvement with Toys for Tots got students "thinking about how fortunate they really are," said Sarah Hammer, a Countryside teacher and student council adviser.

The youngsters selected gifts they would have chosen for themselves if they knew they were only getting one gift, she said.

And the project inspired students in other grades to donate toys for the drive.

"They saw how excited the kids from student council were," Hammer said.

Christmas comes early at Park Alternative

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Bea Boucher
The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- The party favors included diapers and baby bottles.

For the teen mothers at Park Alternative School, the gifts were perfect.

"It's helping people who don't have a lot and who don't have a lot of family who can get them stuff," said Desiree Coffman, a 15-year-old Park junior and mother of a 19-month-old son, Decory.

Coffman and Decory last week were among about 50 teen-agers and their children taking part in a Christmas party hosted by LaSalle Bank's downtown Grand Rapids branch at the school.

The alternative high school, 150 Adams St. SE, provides schooling for pregnant teens and young mothers. The site is also home for Teen Parent Center, an outreach program run by The Salvation Army's Booth Family Services which includes a child development center

There are about 100 teens, 16 pregnant, and about 97 children in the program, said Tenetia Pulliam, who oversees the child development center.

"A lot of people feel these teens are women because they have a baby," said Pulliam, Booth Family Services supervisor of residential programs.

"People don't understand that this is a specialty school. Some (here) are as young as 12, and they're scared to death."

The gifts and the accompanying Christmas celebration, with carols, decorated cookies and brownies and a raffle, was a big deal for the girls, Pulliam said.

"It's like the community is taking care of both children," she said.

LaSalle Bank employees just wanted to do something to help people out, said Diane Wynsma Hyland, first vice president and lead trust administrator at LaSalle.

"We wanted to get more personally involved than just give and walk away," said Hyland, who is advisory board treasurer for The Salvation Army in Grand Rapids.

Thanks to contribution from bank employees and community member Joyce Wisner, each pregnant teen or mom with a newborn received a fleece blanket, sleeper, onesie, baby bottle and socks. Moms with older children received a new outfit, hat and mittens and a blanket. All of the children received a gift from Santa Claus, including a plush toy animal and fruit snacks.

"Everything is new," Hyland said. "These (little) kids didn't ask to be put in this situation, and they deserve to have nice new things just like the rest of us."

School staff also provided car seats, diapers, clothing, pacifiers and bottles.

"It's going to be good, especially for mothers who are struggling and don't have a lot of things," said Amber Latham, a 16-year-old Park junior and mother of a 21-month-old daughter, Marquaisha Welch.

"This is excellent."

As she watched the celebration, Booth Family Services Director Betty Zylstra said it just nice to see everyone have fun.

"The teens' lives are complicated by learning to be a mom and a student and a teenager," she said.

"When I watch them, they're in the party spirit just like any other kid. This is fun."

CD benefits children's charity

Thursday, December 22, 2005

The Grand Rapids Press

ROCKFORD -- A last-minute Christmas gift of holiday music would help a children's charity founded by a Rockford orthodontist.

A "Bright Holidays" CD featuring local jazz pianist Kayle Clements is on sale for \$8 at the office of Dr. Mark Brieden, 158 Marcell Drive NE. Sales will fund Of One Heart, a nonprofit group of doctors who provide surgery to children with facial deformities.

Clements is creative director at Fluis, a Rockford marketing firm that last year helped the charity raise about \$1,500 by donating copies of a CD with songs written by colleague Jeff Lewis. Visit www.csongs.com for details on the new CD.

Belknap gives to those who gave

Thursday, December 22, 2005

By Ben Cunningham
The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- Holiday shopping can be a strain on everybody's pocketbook, but for residents in one northeast Grand Rapids neighborhood things got a little easier last week. Spectrum Health's Belknap Commons Community Center sponsors a program in which donated Christmas presents are sold at a 50 percent discount. Residents of the Belknap neighborhood can earn vouchers of up to \$30 in credit per child by volunteering at the center.

"People have worked all year long, put in the hours," said Andrea Reynolds, program coordinator at the center. "It's open to the neighborhood.

"I would love to open it up to the whole city if I could."

The community center houses counseling programs, a computer lab, kitchen facilities, referral services and coordinates a food pantry among other things. Last year, the Christmas present program helped 180 kids from 38 families. This year, it helped 140 kids from 36 families. Dolls, trucks, musical instruments and electronics of all shapes and sizes were on display. All the presents, worth a total of \$4,386, come as donations from other Spectrum Health sites.

Sherry Dulaney was shopping for six kids between the ages of 9 and 15. She and her husband earned vouchers by volunteering at the community center.

What she was buying will remain a secret, until Christmas morning.

"This is the best discount you can find," she said, with a bag full of gifts for three of her children.

"It really can make a Christmas."

Reynolds says the program is more than a charity program.

"It really gives the neighbors a sense of pride in what they are doing, that they are involved in their neighborhood," she said. "It is an incredible thing."

Genoa Township
Livingston Briefs
Detroit News
December 22, 2005

Volunteer income tax help sought

The Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency and the Accounting Aid Society seek volunteers in helping limited-income families prepare for and file their income tax returns and tax credits. Tax training for both new and returning volunteers will be held from 6-10 p.m. on Jan. 17 and Jan. 24 at Cleary University, 3750 Cleary Drive in Genoa Township. For information, go to www.accountingaidsociety.org or call (248) 209-2791.